The
COMMONWEAL

VOLUME XXXIII February 7, 1941 NUMBER 16

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THE COMMONWEAL is indexed in the *Reader's Guide, Catholic Periodical Index* and *Catholic Bookman.*

Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Avenue, New York. Annual Subscription: U. S. and Canada, $5.00; Foreign, $6.00.

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Hitler's Unfinished Business

MILITARY, as well as political, testimony tells that the battlefields of Albania and Africa, the air frontier between England and Germany and the sea where ships are attacked are not the only places where the war of the Nazis will be settled. In addition to succeeding in military battles, the Nazis would have to organize and administer the lands and peoples they set out to rule, if they were to achieve their New Order, and the resistance of a people to Nazism is not finally eliminated by their defeat on the field. We so much want to believe that the overrun countries of Europe are still furnishing living opposition to Hitler, that we distrust our own wishful thinking in commenting upon European reports. This week we will not lean over backward.

Postscript to Defeat

The chaos of Romania is the feature story of the present. Second is the further report issued by Monsignor Zygmant Kaczynski on the Nazi fight against the Church in Poland. A report of similar if less dramatic kind was printed January 28 in the New York *Herald Tribune:* "The bishopric of Bruges recently forbade all members of its teaching staff to attend meetings of Flemish extremists or to read their newspapers." The Flemish extremists are the Belgian group most closely identified with the Nazis. From Amsterdam, the AP sends a report, via Berlin, dated January 27: "The Catholic Episcopacy of the Netherlands defied National Socialism (Nazism) in a pastoral letter read in all churches yesterday, and reiterated a former refusal to administer extreme unction and bury with Catholic rites 'Liberals, Socialists, Communists and National Socialists.' The letter was signed by the Archbishop and four bishops." We do not know what technical meaning attaches here to "Liberal" or "Socialist"—certainly a defined content involving repudiation of the Church and specific philosophic and religious errors, and not the vague "progressivism" they so often mean in England and the US—but we know that "National Socialist" means Nazi in its Dutch terms of identity with Hitler's efforts and errors. Hitler has not won the Church and the Catholics of Holland. The supposed Nazi "New Order" necessitates *total* defeat, and the people of Europe will never all succumb to that defeat. Hitler has on his hands a problem deeper and more fundamental than blood itself, of which he talks so much, as this new testimony proclaims.

The Case of France

AND THEN there is France. When France fell, and for months after she fell, Frenchmen in exile together with Englishmen and Americans, in a discordant chorus of disappointment and indignation, vied with each other in hysterical denunciation of the acts and motives of Frenchmen in France—before the war, during the fighting, after the armistice. Who had not betrayed? Who was not tainted with defeatism or simple physical vice? Somerset Maugham, after having admired in a book of facile propaganda all the virtues of England's ally, came to this country to lament French immorality. France, unlike Belgium, unlike Norway, unlike Holland, was proved abundantly to be a country which had fallen because it had not wished to save itself nor was it worth saving.

Once fallen what did all these angry people see in France? A puppet government, presided over by a senile dictator and administered by traitors. Petain the defeatist of Verdun! Romantically and vicariously heroic, these people summoned the French nation—after having proclaimed its decadence—to die on the barricades. Also to starve. Defaming and exhorting, the voices howled in monotonous fury. The French could not hear: in this country people stopped listening. The living and silent people of France, prisoners in a vast prison camp, now are forgotten.

We of THE COMMONWEAL never joined in the uproar of what charitably may be called disappointed love. We remembered, and we kept before our eyes, the human beings we knew were there in France—defeated, humiliated, prisoners,

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men and women, peasants and intellectuals. We did not summon them to any action we knew we could not take ourselves were we in their position. We counted, and increasingly we count, on the determined adherence of Frenchmen to the values and traditions, to the spiritual and intellectual liberties, to all that have made the word and the fact of France mean what they have meant in history and in thought. We know that all these qualities which the world has long associated with France demand for their continuation a free community of Frenchmen, a free France in a free Europe. We know that any foreign police and any foreign pressure can only deepen the conviction in all French hearts that liberty is essential to the life of France. There is the vocation of the Frenchman, prisoner in his country, to suffer, perhaps for a long time, yet to preserve his faith in freedom: there is the vocation of the free lance soldier, call him de Gaulle, who has broken with the French Government in order to keep alive an active military resistance. The two vocations merge in a purpose common to all Frenchmen. The will of the French to survive disaster, the greatest nation subjected to German rule to maintain its spiritual and material identity, is something which cannot be broken. It is against such a granitic structure of the human will that any alien project of total conquest must break. It is because of a consciousness of freedom parallel to that of the French people that the many peoples of continental Europe will survive. We have faith that freedom in Europe, no matter how the war proceeds, has not lost faithful companions and leaders in the minds and hearts of Frenchmen—in France or outside of France.

Adler vs. Hutchins on Foreign Policy

Model for Debate

IN THE comparatively untroubled subjects of philosophy and historical interpretation President Hutchins and Professor Adler of the University of Chicago are known to see eye to eye on fundamentals, though naturally they have had occasion to differ amicably for a number of years. Their famous jointly conducted course in the history of civilization is marked by the most healthy and vigorous discussion. Now they differ on the burning and immediate question of the war. Hutchins maintained in a recent broadcast from the library of his home that the United States would serve humanity better by keeping out of the war. He held that self-defense did not justify entry, since it would be impossible for the Nazis to attack a well-prepared America. He further said that present injustices and inhumanities within our own borders disqualified us now from leading a great crusade for justice and freedom elsewhere and that what the world needed most of all was the example of a nation devoted to true democracy, social justice and self-sacrifice for the common good. Adler's rebutting interview in the Chicago *Daily Times* affirmed his agreement with Hutchins on basic principles and ultimate ends. He found their differences arose from practical judgments based on different judgments of fact. Adler said he was in favor of going "to war if necessary to prevent a German victory over Great Britain." He supposed the dictators might be able successfully to attack the U.S. "There is little difference between creating a war economy and war itself." Since in either case social reconstruction would necessarily have to be postponed, why rule out going to war? If war should result in total destruction, that is better than a Hitler triumph. In an exhausted world we would still have ourselves, but "under Hitler we will not even have ourselves and there will be no opportunity for reconstructing a moral order." In short Hutchins says that we cannot achieve "the four freedoms" for humanity by going to war, while Adler says we should be willing to try war if necessary. The upshot of these "practical judgments" is inconclusive, but in view of the vituperation, emotionalism and illogic characteristic of so much of the argument heard today we are grateful for this model for discussion between advocates of diametrically opposed programs for winning out over totalitarianism.

Belgium Faces Starvation

Committee Reports

IN THE first debates on feeding the conquered countries, though the range of opinion was extreme and emotion violent, there was at least active public interest in the question. The lapse of only a few months seems subtly to have altered this: perhaps because our national anxieties have grown in the interval, perhaps merely because so little feeding has actually been done. Yet these very months which seem somehow to have removed the problem from us a degree or two, have made the situation of the conquered steadily worse. As regards Belgium, for example, the matter is put beyond doubt by a statement just issued from the office of Mr. Hoover, as chairman of the National Committee on Food for the Five Small Democracies. A group of investigators reports to Mr. Hoover's committee that Belgium is in the gravest plight. The present "theoretical" ration has a food value about half as great as that of England or Germany; yet even this is "no longer effective, since only 60 percent of meats and fats and 20 percent of potatoes are distributed." Beans and peas are exhausted, and breadstuffs will be exhausted by mid-February. With crops under average, imports negligible, and hogs and cattle decreased to a fraction of former numbers, the very life of the country is at stake,

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and that in the most immediate and appalling sense. Those of our citizens who have been confident that "if we did not do it, Germany would," are refuted by these figures. And not by these alone. The acute needs of Finland are known. The French ambassador reports the danger of epidemics from malnutrition in unoccupied France. Must we actually see movies of the famine-stricken laid out dead in rows before we rouse ourselves to do what we should have done months ago?

Housing Problem Grows More Urgent

Defense Needs Bring Action

CURRENTLY the National Public Housing Conference has been holding its tenth annual meeting. Yet considering the scope of the need and the heightened agitation of most recent years America's low-cost housing record is none too impressive. The National Resources Planning Board estimates that there is today an immediate need of 2,500,000 new homes exclusive of defense industries and farm dwellings. But current discussion centers primarily on housing obstacles to the progress of defense industries. There are reports from various sections of the country that key workers in munitions and shipbuilding plants are refusing to work overtime because of the distance they must live from their places of employment. The accepted figure in Washington is 200,000 new dwelling units needed to house defense workers. An indication of the lag is found in figures for building permit valuations which in 1940 increased 58% for non-residential buildings and only 12% for dwellings over 1939. In December there were less residential building permits in the 2,000 leading American cities than in 1939, while non-residential permits were up by over 400%. Evils due to human needs hitherto neglected out of public lethargy and indifference are now being in part attacked in the name of national defense. Speed and more speed is the watchword. Some 73,000 new units are said to be in process. And with the demand for speed goes the danger of creating new post-war slums, ghost towns and other drags on the community. Here we should be thankful for the available experience of the FHA, the USHA, and other New Deal housing agencies, for that should prevent some of the worst errors in the new construction. Since some 70 percent of the defense workers are believed to receive $24 a week or less, it is a distinctly low-cost housing proposition. And although the total construction brought about by New Deal housing agencies falls far short of the nation's needs, these housing authorities must receive every credit for providing a model for and keeping alive the ideal of decent housing for every inhabitant of the United States. Decent housing will be one of the major domestic tasks of the peace.

A Noble Speech

Japan and Fatalism

"BILLIONS of yen have been spent and 100,000 officers and men sacrificed. I ask the forgiveness of the Emperor and the people. While no hope of ending the China war is seen, the situation has become most serious elsewhere. Facing unprecedented difficulties, I am moved to awe by the Emperor's concern. I feel that I must remain at my post, powerless and without ability that I am, as my last service to the State." In these words, Prince Fumimaro Konoye promised to remain Premier of Japan.

We are tempted to admire, indeed we cannot help admiring, the formal humility of his devotion to the Emperor and to Japan, and the submission of his personal life to the appalling state of affairs which threaten his country. His statement is in the best classical tradition of the Samurai. Yet in that tradition of honor and of sacrifice there is a certain fatalism which we reject—just as we reject the suicides in which so often it has been embodied. We cannot admit the thesis that Japan is doomed world without end to a guiltless succession of aggressive acts throughout the entire East. Less felicitous in expression and without the excuse of an honorable tradition, Hitler occasionally has struck the same note. We refuse to admit that the world is bound to seek a solution for its problems through any providential will to conquer on the part of certain powers. And when Prince Konoye, speaking for one of these powers, admits that no hope of ending the war is seen, it occurs to us, and it might occur to the Japanese people, to question the fatal nature of the war and the wisdom of the Japanese leaders in pursuing it.

A Plea for Old Favorites

In a land where tradition holds so little sway over the public mind there is a heightening of the natural tendency of children to look with disdain on the rosy reminiscences of their parents, on the fancies and enjoyments of their youthful years. There is, to be sure, a slight revival in bob-sledding, hiking, picnics and bicycles built for two, but for most young people these activities are held decidedly inferior to auto rides, radios, bistros, auto races, movies. No wonder then that there is rebellion over the enforced diet of songs of yesteryear induced by the ASCAP-BMI dispute. It is not even surprising that some youthful collegians with typical flair for amusing expressiveness hung "Jeannie with the Light Brown Hair" in effigy. But now older people who listen to the radio are beginning to grumble that their favorite ditties of younger days are being brought back too often. The jaunty feelings for the good old days these songs produced when trotted out occasionally are giving way to a disgruntled preference

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even for the latest variation of "Tuxedo Junction."

We tend to deplore the protraction of disputes where livelihoods are involved; in this case in addition, if ASCAP and the others do not come to terms pretty soon, the songs of the gay 90's will never recover. The strength of nostalgia is great, but not quite this great.

Forum

What Price Peace?

IT IS DIFFICULT to understand why Senator Wheeler, Lindbergh, Kennedy, W. R. Castle and their followers advocate peace at the present moment. Do they believe it is possible to make peace with gangsters? They say, all except Lindbergh, that they hope Great Britain will win. In the next breath, they say helping Britain will prolong the war and that is what we must not do. They admit Britain cannot hold out if we do not help. They want her to win, but they do not want to help enough to make her win, for that means a long war. Where do we go from there?

The thought recurs that the advocates of a negotiated peace do not care what happens to the foundations of our civilization. Assuredly it is suicidal to take our future on the word of professed liars. Yet for the sake of a few years of armed "peace" they would willingly jettison the principles which brought our country into being. They know full well what Hitler would do with the time gained by such a "peace." It would be splendid for him, but it would also be a grim jest at the expense of the civilized world.

Our President has committed us to the destruction of totalitarian ideology. The religious leaders of the world have condemned it in no uncertain terms. Do not Wheeler, Lindbergh, Kennedy and the others know this, or do they not care? Lindbergh says we must cooperate with the winner, whoever it is. Then he proceeds to say that he hopes nobody wins, and also that it does not matter who wins. Senator Wheeler wants us to force Great Britain to sue for peace on terms so fantastic that they are obviously a cloak for something else. Can it be that he desires to end the war at any price? Kennedy, trying to make up for his earlier indiscretions by posing as a calm, cool analyst, counsels rearmament and aid to Britain short of actual participation in the war—even if such participation is needed in order to win. He revealed his blindness to the moral issues when he asked: "What would be our war aims?" Castle, in his turn, says he wants to help Britain to win and is willing to help to a certain degree—provided she pays for everything. Always it is the same refrain. Help Britain but be careful that you do not help enough to make any difference, for that might annoy Hitler. Why are they afraid of annoying Hitler while Britain is still intact and at the same time assure us that Hitler cannot possibly get at us even if Britain goes under? Is it not time that the people of America who believe in truth and justice make it clear that they want none of this "leadership"? By their vote, and according to many polls, the people have already done so. Yet these men continue to win their most important point. Their rallying cry is "delay." Now they unite to demand that we state our war aims. Have they missed the moral aims entirely or is this another pretext for delay in the hope that Great Britain will lose before our help can be made effective?

Great Britain is still fighting and we still have a chance to save ourselves from a long and bitter struggle against an Axis-dominated world; against a combine that understands it must destroy the last vestiges of freedom if it is actually to control the whole of this planet and profit by the conquests it has made to date. We have the chance and we must grasp it quickly by removing all limits on what our help to Britain shall be. For no man can tell from day to day what the Axis will try next, or what may be required of us to win. If we do limit our actions, the very things we say we shall not do may soon become the things without which victory cannot be won. We can lose everything we have done so far by half measures. We can win if we make up our minds once and for all that the stakes are important and determine to act.

One thing is obvious now. The life line that connects us to Great Britain must be kept intact for our common safety. If our ships and planes are required to assure this, *now* is the time to use them. We must take and keep the initiative. What Hitler may say or do about that is his own business. We truly cannot afford to restrict ourselves if we really mean that Hitler is to be beaten. We cannot afford not to beat him if we want to leave a decent world for our children.

Somehow we must make Wheeler, Lindbergh, Kennedy and the rest realize that we are in the midst of a world revolution. Our stake is the American ideal, the soul of man. No lesser terms suffice to describe it. That is what makes those who counsel negotiations with the Axis the worst enemies of man, whether they realize it or not. Lacking vision themselves, they beg us all to sell our ideals for a "peace" barren of virtue or hope; for a treacherous interval, like the central calm of a typhoon, which is only the precursor of more terrible things to come. Unfortunately time is on their side. For they can still cause delay and speed is our only hope. But it is not yet too late if the American people will tell these men plainly what they think of their advice and that they intend to see this thing through no matter how much effort and sacrifice it requires.

WILLIAM M. AGAR.

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Upon Being Gazed at by A Mouse

The author of "Embezzled Heaven" undertakes a unique literary work of interpretation.

By Franz Werfel. *Translated by* H. and R. Norden

THIS MOUSE cost me a sleepless night. God only knows how he got up to the second floor and into my room. Through the door, the heating system, the water pipes. With his sharp rustling and quick scurrying he was there, inexorably, as soon as I put out the light. Now and then I heard him thud down from a raised vantage point to the stone floor. An unpleasant sound. I was tired and desperate. But the mouse would not be exorcized. He never interrupted his work. I switched the light on and off some thirty times in these hours, to sour the rodent's sojourn in my room; I opened the door to invite his escape; but all that was of no use. The busy mouse had no intention to be frightened or to yield. No sooner had I turned on the light, when there was an instant silence, harmless and vicious. When it was dark again, the rustling was at once resumed, as though someone had turned over a waste basket and was going through it with light-fingered sneaky hands.

Not until toward two o'clock did I remember that on the little table near the bed there were a few menthol drops of the kind I was accustomed to use to counteract the smoking habit. I got up and examined the table. No doubt about it, a few of the drops had vanished. The mouse had carried them off to feed his brood. So he was a mouse father, a house father! Slyly I hid the sweets in the drawer, hoping that in the absence of this food supply the offending rodent might look elsewhere to pursue his struggle for existence. The hope was vain. The rustling in the dark only grew busier, faster, and sharper, as though from sudden perplexity. It now obtruded upon my fatigued senses from all sides. Now it was close to me, now on the other side of the room, on the bookshelf; but always it returned to the little table, almost wild with disappointment. I had never heard anything to compare with the relentless pertinacity of this worried to and fro. No doubt it sounds silly, but I felt the unique personality of this mouse with startling clarity.

I resolved to corner the mouse, to catch him red-handed, to lay eyes on him. Slowly I stretched out my hand toward the light switch, turning it on abruptly. The assault succeeded. The ambushed rodent stood upright against the table-leg he was on the point of scaling for the hundredth time. He sank back, cowering in alarm, but did not flee. In all likelihood his strength had momentarily deserted him, after so many hours of exhausting effort. Slowly I brought my head closer. The spell-bound mouse did not stir. He looked at me with his grave, attentive mouse eyes.

Words such as these quite readily sound exaggerated when one pronounces them. But that was really the way it was. From the startlingly intelligent gaze of the mouse there stared at me the unity of all life and the incomprehensible wretchedness of all that is mortal. The human gaze never has this depth, this expectancy of death. The gaze of a dog, despite all its ineffable sadness, is always no more than the gaze of a dog. It is full of genuine sadness, but at the same time it simulates that sadness, in order to curry man's favor. My mouse, on the other hand, was a domestic animal only in a limited sense. He was, rather, a gray scavenger, invading the house from below at night and only on the most pressing business. He made no pretenses—neither to himself nor to me. He knew all the cruelty of the world, without any saving lies. He expected of me what he would have expected, on somewhat greater scale, of a cat: the end! The unity of life and the wretchedness of all that is mortal stared at me from these tiny eyes that were poised with intelligence and that spoke to me clearly. I understood them, even though it is difficult to translate the confessions of a mouse's gaze into human words:

"Well, you can see that I am lost, that I cannot lift my legs. What are you waiting for? With your stealth, your sudden light, your patient ambush you have succeeded in hitting upon the weak point in the nervous system of mice, paralyzing my usually nimble will-power. Your room was rich pickings for me. So much paper to be gnawed—even though the nutritive value of paper is not overly great. And then those overpowering sweets! You nearly drove me insane, and you trapped me into throwing caution to the winds! Well, this is what I get! Fortunately I was able to make off with a little of it for the family. Fall has come and everything is moving from the rich open country back into the settled regions—even mousedom. Rain has been falling day and night. The sewer in which we live is flooded. Our living

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space has been taken away by forces outside our control. The annual famine is on.

It is only by means of hard and intrepid work can one succeed in penetrating through impossible chinks and holes into a friendly room like yours. And there, all that is needed is suddenly on hand, and work is found once more. I do not know why creatures like myself live. You probably know it, for you are all-powerful. I only know that this life of mine means work. What harder work could there be than to find food and to carry it home? All life is no more than finding food for your own and carrying it home—all life is only work, work, work, until the final moment! I think it is work that is costing me my neck tonight. The find was too overpowering. After so much privation, all those sweets! Well, when are you going to strike? Don't you see that I have completely given myself up for lost?"

No! This translation of the mouse's gaze into human words is altogether inadequate. Yet any other translation would be equally so. The unity of life and the wretchedness of all that is mortal cannot be translated into words. Enough! For a long while the mouse and I gazed into each other's eyes, so different yet so much alike, and our souls, so different yet so much alike, mutually impinged upon each other in terrifying amazement. I made a violent motion to dismiss the mouse. Like a flash, he vanished into nothingness. But no sooner had I put out the light once more than he resumed his worried to and fro with relentless pertinacity. This time I surrendered and, already half-asleep, resolved to buy a mousetrap on the morrow.

Britain Tightens Her Belt

Humbug does not hide the issues being met behind the humbug.

By J. L. Benvenisti

IT IS NOW nearly four months since the Blitz started in on us and the chief lesson we have learned from it is the amazing scope of human adaptability. Air raids have now become part of the normal phenomena of life like the income tax collector. There were times when there were no air raids and there was a time (so the Ancients say) when there was no income tax. Those times are now past but it does not seem to occur to anybody to decide on these grounds that survival is not preferable to dissolution.

The bombing may be said to be inflicting wounds upon us that are of two kinds. The first I have touched on in a previous article: I refer to the effect that bombing may have on the birth rate. I cannot help thinking that it will induce many people, for the time being at any rate, to refuse parenthood. Moreover actual physical circumstances, in particular the need for sleeping in air raid shelters, many of which are after all large communal dormitories, cannot fail to have certain effects in this connection.

The other effect is almost equally far-reaching. It is the destruction of the life of the mind. Books are still being published and to some extent being bought, but I doubt whether they are being read much. It has been observed that people take books into air raid shelters and never open them. An editor of a paper which makes a particular feature of its correspondence columns tells me that whereas previously he had only room for a fraction of the letters sent in, he now had the greatest difficulty in getting an adequate supply of the letters that are worth printing. Except with a small minority, intelligent public discussion is at a standstill. People live from day to day and their horizon is limited by the next twenty-four hours.

That admirable organization which calls itself "Mass Observation," whose business it is to record changes of popular mood and habit, reports that there has been a noticeable decline in hatred, or at any rate a decline in violence of feeling. Mr. Tom Harrisson, its founder, wrote last month:

> The first effect of air raids in any town is a violent demand to bomb the enemy back, but the long cascade of bombs over London has brought people a stage further, into a realization through first-hand experience that this method is unlikely to do so much towards winning the war as had previously been supposed. This is important because the main war aim of a great many working people was to blast the enemy. Now even that seems in decline.

The general mood at the moment then is one of a patient stoicism that amounts at times to very real heroism. I would (even at the risk of digressing) like to record a small incident for you because I myself experienced it and it is peculiarly vivid in my mind. A little time ago I had taken a seat in the dining car of a train at one of the London termini when bombs began to fall uncomfortably close. The platform alongside the train was packed with people. There were many children. A direct hit through the glass roof would have

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turned the place into a shambles. Anybody who says that he was happy and unconcerned at that moment must be a first class liar. Together with my fellow passengers I gripped the edge of the dining table ready for a quick dive underneath, should the next one sound as though it were coming appreciably nearer. But there was nevertheless something that I had time to observe.

On the other side of the platform were stone buildings which would at least have given protection against splinters and fragments of glass. The crowd began moving towards them, but I noticed that *not a single individual quickened his pace.* Most of them were walking up or down the platform when the original bombs fell. All they did was to change their direction—and some of them didn't even do that. You may call this mental inertia if you like or, like our enemies, speak of the masochistic tendency towards self-immolation, but that is the kind of fact with which you have to deal.

However, whether or no mental lethargy is the characteristic of the mass, there is in certain quarters every evidence of the traditional and salutary wide-awakeness and a problem of intense difficulty is being solved with a slickness and smoothness which cannot but excite admiration in the observer and may in certain of its aspects appeal to a certain sardonic sense of humor in him.

£16 million a day

The British Government's expenditure at present according to the latest returns is running at nearly £16 million a day, which must be nearly five-sixths of the national income, and there is a growing realization that something drastic has got to be done and done very quickly to meet this fantastic bill. This, of course, is not merely just a matter of money. The monetary picture is merely a reflection of the need for certain physical dispositions which are indispensable if we are not to go into headlong collapse, and to ensure that these dispositions are made needs, in the prevailing circumstances, the combination of firmness with an enormous delicacy of touch.

Let us look at the problem a little more closely. If you are going to spend these enormous sums and not dissipate all your capital assets prematurely it obviously means that your home production has got to be increased and that every person in the country who is physically capable of work must be put to work as soon as possible. But if you are going to put everybody to work then you have got to feed everybody and that is precisely what in normal times no industrial country really succeeds in doing. In other words, Britain's problem is that at a time when she is in a state of siege she must maintain more people on a full working diet than she ever maintained before the outbreak of hostilities. This can only be done by a new and revolutionary use of her resources, so as to provide for everybody a very simple standardized ration of all the necessities of life. Moreover, it is not a question of food alone. If our war effort is to be at its maximum it is obvious that every type of civilian production has got to be sacrificed and life for everybody has got to be cut down to the bare essentials. All this implies depressing everybody down to one uniform level.

Now unfortunately, the whole principle of Trade Unionism and of the British Labor Movement rests not only on free collective bargaining but also on the sharp differentiation between different groups of wage earners without which free bargaining is pointless, and any modification of this situation is liable to arouse the suspicion that there is an "attack on working class standards." Who is supposed to be attacking those standards is never quite clear—presumably the wicked capitalists, despite the fact that in contemporary times when production is normally devoted overwhelmingly to consumer goods, capitalists have an obvious interest in maintaining purchasing power as high as possible.

The labor leaders

The Trade Union leaders themselves bear some responsibility for all this curious confusion of thought, since in order to hold down their jobs and maintain their prestige they have had in the past perpetually to keep up the pretense that every concession to the wage earner was gained in the teeth of the most brutal and obstinate opposition (whereas in reality these affairs are in nine cases out of ten settled in a most amicable manner). They were in fact men doomed to be perpetually assuming the attitudes of Saint George while secretly terror-struck at the possibility of a deficit of dragons. Trade Union leaders are now working wholeheartedly for the national cause but habits of thought which they themselves have set up tend to die hard.

I am anxious not to give the impression that I regard the Trade Unions as having a sort of vested interest in social resentment. Indeed in so far as such an interest exists, it lies, I think, elsewhere. There are in this, as in every other country, elements in no way particularly representative of the working class which stand to gain by exploiting the curious emotional content of the whole concept of profit.

We have recently had an admirable example of this in Britain in the new 100 percent Excess Profits Tax which was conceded with a curious willingness to Labor agitation. Now a 100 percent Excess Profits Tax in war seems on the face of it an altogether admirable arrangement. In actual fact the tax has meant that struggling firms which just started to turn the corner about two years ago are now reduced to permanent financial impotence,

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while owners of wasting assets and in particular the firms which came into being to supply the war effort will scarcely get a penny back from their investments. Yet such firms quite legitimately regarded their prospective profits as containing a repayment of their capital which would then be available for them to use over again for some other purpose and the tax as far as those firms are concerned will simply be a capital levy. Now there are very weighty arguments both for and against a capital levy, but I have never yet heard the most ardent advocate of such a measure claim that a certain number of firms should be picked out and quite arbitrarily mulcted while others go scot free. Yet this is precisely what is happening.

However long such lingering vestiges as still remain (they are really very slight) of a sort of persecution complex among wage earners which the new war time order might possibly activate, they are receiving very expert political therapy.

The technique which has been adopted is the traditional technique of organizing a thoroughly noisy and bitter stage fight about some quite secondary, or even irrelevant aspect of the issue while the main issue is decided without discussion. (In this case the shadow issue is the theory of free contract and the real issue is that of wage differentiation.) I do not believe that anybody actually arranges these grandstand shows; they are just allowed to happen, but they do happen with the most amazing degree of convenience.

There is a great and glorious row going on at the present moment about something called compulsion, or industrial conscription. Mr. Bevin, Trade Union leader and Minister of Labor, gets up in the House of Commons and talks about the psychology of the British people and how they will not stand for being ordered about and says that he believes in leadership and not in dictatorship. As soon as he has said his piece up jumps another member and says that the Right Honourable gentleman does not know what he is talking about and that once the British people has got its back to the wall it will accept any sort of discipline and so on and so forth and then both sides go to it with great guns banging and all the little newspaper dogs barking at their heels. Really there are times when one thanks heaven for the privilege of being a British taxpayer. Imperial Rome had nothing on us in the matter of circuses.

Of course it is perfectly obvious to anybody who gives two minutes of thought to the matter that the whole debate is completely meaningless. Anybody listening to Mr. Bevin would imagine that the other side wanted to march off wage earners in gangs at the point of the pistol, or that the free citizen would receive a communication telling him to report under pain of death at machine tool number 4 at such and such a factory on such and such a date. All this is, of course, grotesque. For one thing there is not and never will be the machinery whereby some central office can fit everybody into his place like this. It would be far too cumbersome to work; also it is totally unnecessary. Mobilizing the nation does not mean ordering everybody about. It means finding out what jobs have got to be done and seeing that there are people available to do them and the only compulsion that is either practicable or necessary is the compulsion that nine men out of ten experience every day of their lives, which is the compulsion to take the job that is offered because you cannot afford not to take it.

Compulsion

Needless to say this compulsion is already being introduced. It is being done by the Government's "limitations of supplies" orders. By withholding supplies of the materials necessary for civilian production the Government forces factories to shut down and quite recently a hundred thousand workers lost their jobs in this manner in the textile trades. All that is necessary now is to offer them new ones, and since nobody is now allowed to start up any sort of manufacture, it is quite obvious that the Government, or rather the factories working on Government work, will have the monopoly of all the jobs that are going.

But all this is secondary and there still remains the really vital problem of making uniform the various differentiated rates of pay without which the whole principle of collective bargaining is, as I have already indicated, merely so much hot air—and concerning this, of course, the most discreet and tactful silence is preserved. Now this latter problem is really solved by the same method as the first, namely by limitation of supplies, though this has to be coupled with an extension of rationing. As prices become fixed for pretty well everything, and as nobody whether rich or poor can buy more than a given quantity of any article and must pay a given price for what he does buy, then money, provided you have sufficient to buy your daily ration (and presumably everybody will have that) becomes absolutely meaningless and it does not much matter whether you have more or less of it. Of course there will be some loopholes, since there are some things which cannot be rationed. You will still, I suppose, be able to have unlimited rides on the Underground Railway and the rich will be able to pay for more of these than the poor. Also the Government would in my opinion be distinctly unwise to ration beer. So though the sacred right of collective bargaining may still remain, I cannot see anybody bothering much about it. I cannot see the British working man going on strike for the right to drink unlimited beer, or to have unlimited joy rides on the Underground Railway. He likes beer but he does not like it quite as much as that, and I have never even heard it suggested that he

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is in any way passionately affected towards the Underground Railway. There will only be one thing to be done with money and that will be to hand it over to the Government at 3 percent.

Some time ago Mr. Maynard Keynes came out with his celebrated "deferred pay" scheme according to which everybody was to have a substantial portion of his income deducted at source, and a blocked savings account, which could not be realized until some unspecified date after the war, was to be issued in respect of the deducted portion. This "deferred pay" scheme was violently opposed because in the words of Sir Robert Kindersley of the Bank of England, of all people, "the British nation would be soured by compulsion."

Needless to say the new technique makes Mr. Keynes's scheme quite unnecessary and the most modest elementary ballyhoo will now suffice for the British Government to get all the money it wants. In the past twelve months voluntary private savings rose from about £400 million a year to nearly five times that figure. It is said that in the next twelve months we are aiming to double this amount—and we shall get it.

Truth behind humbug

Now it is very easy to be cynical and superior, to speak of the genius of the British governing clique for fooling all of the people all the time, of the docility of the British mass and all the rest of it; but such a judgment is extremely shallow. The governing group in Great Britain could not get away with this kind of thing unless there were a high degree of confidence in it, and there would never be such confidence in it, unless there were the instinctive knowledge that behind all the make-believe and maneuvre there is a sort of very real human regard which Englishmen of all ranks really do have for one another. That is where the gibes of Goebbels miss their point. Our enemies gibe at us because we are largely governed by humbug—whereas of course in the totalitarian countries nobody ever speaks anything but the strict truth on any occasion whatever and the arts of propaganda and mass-suggestion are completely unknown. Our enemies are, however, right. We are governed by humbug. So are most nations. What Herr Goebbels and his friends do not see is not so much of that quality of different humbugs varies (British humbug is the best in the world) but also its motivation; and that there is a vast difference between sugaring a pill and disguising a poison, between playing upon people's weaknesses and delusions in order to get a difficult and necessary job done, and blackening and blackguarding the innocent and defenseless. It needs a very delicate insight into the shams of democracy to discern the moral realities about it, and democracy must be a very strong thing if it can allow me at such a moment to make fun of its shams.

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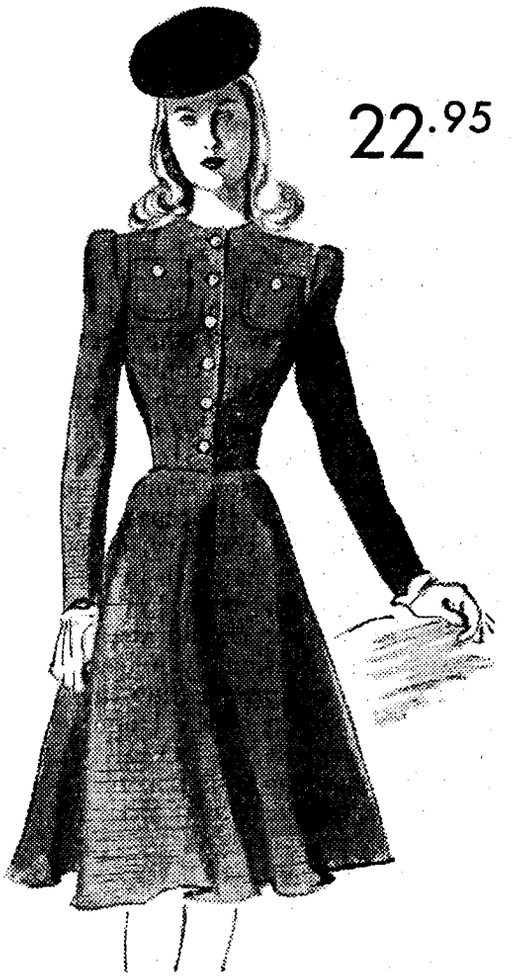

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Latin America Is Dynamite

And as such must be handled by people who know how.

By **Edwin Ryan**

TEN YEARS ago it was not easy to persuade Catholics of this country to take an interest in Latin America. The subject was new and many of them seemed to feel that it was not especially important, so that in those days little could be hoped for beyond a tolerantly polite hearing. Now the pendulum has swung to the opposite extreme and we are threatened with an *inundatio camelorum* into that hitherto much neglected field. Persons who not long ago hardly ever thought about Latin America are now not only thinking about it but lecturing about it and writing about it, blissfully regardless of the fact that Latin America is a difficult and complicated study, or rather complexus of studies, which cannot be mastered by "reading up" on this or that phase of it nor even by a tour "around South America." I do not maintain that a person should avoid the subject altogether unless he is prepared to delve into it profoundly. On the contrary, everyone should be encouraged to take as much interest as he can in our Latin neighbors; what I'm trying to point out here is that no one should attempt to discuss Latin America professionally or semi-professionally without adequate preparation, and that means (1) a solid grounding in the languages and the history of those regions and (2) intimate acquaintance with the places and the persons he treats of. In plain words, he must know what he is talking about.

At first sight it would seem a waste of time to dwell on a principle so obvious, but sad experience teaches that it is often the obvious that most readily escapes notice. It certainly has escaped notice often in this connection. There are now in the United States Catholics coming forward with opinions, plans, schemes and advice regarding Latin America who could not pass a grade school examination in Latin American history, not to speak of languages, literature, economics or archeology. If that statement seems exaggerated here are a few proofs. One of them was recently on the point of sending to a Catholic group in South America a message praising "Hispanidad." He did not know that that is a movement directed from Spain under the aegis of Hitler to undermine the influence of the United States in Latin America. It is also said to have an anti-Catholic tinge, and the intrusion of "Hispanidad" into a conference of Catholic youth in Lima a few years ago aroused considerable indignation—naturally, because they know what it is. Now, what would have been the consequences of that message if it had slipped through? Fortunately it was stopped in time. On another occasion a man who happened to have heard that the Spanish-speaking countries in America celebrate the twelfth of October as "El Dia de la Raza" and use the observance as an opportunity to glorify everything Spanish was going to send on that date a cablegram of congratulations—to Brazil! He knew so little about South America that he was unaware that Brazil is not a Spanish country and that to send them that cablegram would be like congratulating De Valera on the twelfth of July. Once again prompt action prevented the error. But sometimes the blunder is committed before it can be stopped, and then we are faced with the unpleasant and probably difficult task of correcting it, as happened once here in Washington. A Catholic addressing the graduates at a Catholic college commencement attacked the government of Chile for having incited the destruction of churches in Santiago the day before. After the commencement he was told that in reality the government had *prevented* the destruction of the churches. "But," he replied, "I said what I read in the papers last night." It was pointed out to him that the newspaper report was incomplete and misleading and that a person speaking in public ought to have sources of information in addition to newspapers. The incident was especially unfortunate since at that time the position of the Church in Chile was delicate (it still is) and his utterance, blaming the Chilean government for doing the very thing it had energetically prevented, would tend to anger people who were trying their best to avoid any clash with the Church. These are but a few specimens of the blunders into which incompetent amateurs can fall when they play with Latin America. I dare not be more particular and more explicit but the reader, if he is well informed and has had some experience, will see what I am getting at.

Everyone who undertakes to deal with Latin America should bear in mind the title of this paper. Yes, Latin America *is* dynamite. I got the phrase from a gentleman here in Washington who knows what he is talking about when he discusses Latin

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America. Scholars know it, diplomats know it, business men know it, and that is why they watch their step so carefully. But the meddlers do not know it, and unless they are restrained, our efforts to build up cordial relations between the Catholics in the United States and those in Latin America will fail. For Latin America is a diversified region, with a variety of races and languages and customs and traditions, with points of friction and conflicting interests, and unless you have all that at your fingers' ends and keep yourself constantly informed by means not available to the general public, you had better keep out—unless you don't mind getting your fingers burned and upsetting the apple-cart in the bargain. Take the matter of attracting Latin American students to our colleges and universities. That has been under consideration for years and only now, after various plans and methods have been carefully pondered, has the Catholic University arrived at the point where it can proceed systematically and prudently, in the only way in which such a project would be handled by sensible people who know the ground. Yet there are some enthusiasts who are now advocating and even promoting a sort of wholesale invitation to Latin American students to flock to the United States and settle down in our institutions. If you have any experience in that line you will not need to be told why that plan was rejected long ago, and the objections raised against it then are if anything stronger now. There are many excellent young men and young women down there who would be a welcome addition to any Catholic school up here, but they have to be sought out and hand-picked. Any other method is headed for trouble.

Serious situation

The situation has become so serious and so menacing that only the other day a lady said to me: "I used to urge Catholics to take an interest in Latin America but now I feel like urging them to keep off it." I ventured the opinion that to do that would be merely replacing one error by another. True, we want to keep out the incompetent but we also want to attract the competent, or those who give promise of becoming competent, and it is not difficult to do both. We already have a fairly large supply of Catholics in this country who can serve admirably as leaders in Latin American projects. Last week I was asked to draw up a list of Catholics who could give radio talks in Spanish or Portuguese or both, and in a few minutes I had off-hand named seven—persons whose word on their respective fields of Latin American activities would carry weight; and the list could easily be made longer. As always happens, those persons do not pose as "authorities," they do not get write-ups in the press. They have too much respect for themselves and too much appreciation of the difficulties of the subject to indulge in such cheap and vulgar self-advertising. They don't need it, since they are well known and highly respected in Hispanic-American circles. They are the kind of people we ought to use.

As for keeping out the meddlers. Why are they meddling at all? For the simple reason that Latin America has become a fashionable subject. A few years back the mode was communism and everyone who wanted to be "on the band wagon" was having a fling at Stalin, thus interfering with those who really understood communism and were able and willing to fight it. Now the fashion has shifted and the faddists, having just heard about Latin America, are giving lectures, forming committees, excogitating "projects" and so on, though some of them know neither enough Portuguese nor enough Spanish to buy a hat. Some of them have actually joined the ranks of the "Good-Willers," thereby making themselves ridiculous as well as troublesome. If people who go to Latin America on "Good Will Tours" know what is said of them down there by people of all ranks from presidents to peons, they would not be flattered. That Catholics should lend themselves to that type of Good Will nonsense is deplorable.

Of course we could console ourselves with the reflection that the Latin American fad, like every other fad, will die out, leaving the faddists to find some other toy to play with. Yes, but in the meantime a lot of harm may be done, some of it possibly irreparable, so we dare not sit back and await the dawning of a brighter day. We must act now, and act decisively, to get rid of the busybodies and so clear the field for those (and we have them) who by study and by experience are fitted to assume, *if called upon,* the difficult function of serving as guides to the Catholics of the United States in their dealings with their brethren below the Rio Grande. To do that successfully requires that a person know well at least one of the Latin American languages, that he shall have mastered at least one phase—history, geography, archeology, culture, economics, etc.—of Latin America, that he shall have experience in dealing with Latin Americans in Latin America, and that he be plentifully endowed with discretion and common sense.

As I have said more than once, there are such Catholics in this country, but there are not enough of them. Consequently we must set about to increase the supply, and the way to do that is to promote in our schools the studies necessary to train them, and then to help Catholics to spend in Latin America time enough to render them acquainted with the place and the people and the subject which they aim at mastering. The details of such training have been worked out and can easily be learned by anyone interested; there is just one word to be added here: Since Latin America is so vast, so diverse, so complicated, so delicate, no one can hope to "know Latin America."

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Each one must specialize, not only in one area but also in one phase of that area. That specialization, like all specialization, must be based on broad general knowledge, and all that demands about ten years of hard work, though perhaps in exceptionally favorable circumstances the goal might be achieved in five. But however long it takes, the essential point to be borne in mind is that what is needed is KNOWLEDGE. No amount of enthusiasm and "good will" can make up for ignorance; in fact, enthusiasm without knowledge is terribly dangerous.

There, then, lies the contribution of our Catholic colleges and our Catholic universities. At present there are not enough graduates of our colleges who are prepared to take up graduate university courses in Latin American subjects. As for the seminaries, well, they seem to be doing nothing at all to educate our future priests in a subject whose vital importance is now recognized all over the land. Could they not give a few lectures on the ecclesiastical history of Latin America? That would be at least a start which would probably create an interest that could be developed by further study, so that in a few years we should be relieved of the present unhappy situation in which we find ourselves, where a history professor in the graduate school of a Catholic university seeks in vain for a student-priest who knows enough Latin American church history to attempt an M.A. dissertation in that field.

So let's get to work gently easing out the undesirables and making room for the desirables, at the same time looking ahead and training a generation of Catholic scholars and diplomats who will be equipped to handle Latin America in the perilous days to come. If we don't there will probably be an explosion and a lot of innocent people will be blown up. For remember, Latin America is dynamite—and we don't hand dynamite to the baby.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

WILLA CATHER'S quality as an artist is tested by the spirit of our age; as all things, and all persons, are, or must be, before that spirit has done its work ("that all nations who have merited by faith the privilege of the children of Israel, may be born again by partaking of God's holy spirit"). Her newest novel, "Sapphira and the Slave Girl" (New York, Knopf), comes like a clearly articulated utterance of that still, small voice which bears its message lucidly, yet with the overtones of mystery, when the great tempests (of the "Build-up") and the earthquaking shocks of publicity are hurling other novels, by other kinds of writers, through vast and evanescent editions, which pass unread silently, leaving no word to be remembered. But Willa Cather is memorable; and will long be remembered—even if the Huns destroy the society she describes and adorns.

Mr. H. L. Binsse has admirably reviewed this exquisitely powerful work of fiction for THE COMMONWEAL's readers. I wish only to add a few footnotes to his study: of a personal kind, perhaps, yet not, I hope, without a general interest—at least for those readers, few yet fit, to whom the aristocratic genius of Willa Cather is one of the fine flowers of a truly democratic American spirit. For I can think of no words more suitable than "aristocratic genius" to suggest (of course I am aware that they do not define) the quality of this creative novelist whose craftsmanship is almost commensurate with her high—her almost supreme—powers of imagination, of intuition, of intelligence, of self-control. I say "almost" is her technique equal to the full expression of her visions of reality, glimpsed down vistas of romance; fortunate—or rather necessarily—there are moods of her own temperament, there are certain of her intuitions so profound that they cannot be more than hinted at; or which no phrases at her command can do more than suggest. This fact is no limitation of Willa Cather's place among major novelists; indeed, it validates her certificate of mastery—granted not by any chair of criticism (which, if it be truly discerning, can but confirm it), but given to Willa Cather as a gift from the world above the world she moves in, and of which she relates her chronicles.

Steadily, as is the way of all wholesome, organic things, her artistry through much practice and fostering has grown. So, of course, has her knowledge of the realities of human life; and, concurrently, her appreciation of the fathomless atmosphere of the mystery in which all human beings live and move and by which they are—without which, in a sense beyond all language, there is nothing. To far too many artists—on becoming conscious of this ineluctable factor in life—like Till, in this story by Willa Cather, "the heavy atmosphere brings a heaviness of heart." And, as Nietschze truly tried to say before he passed into the darkness of the mere shadow of mystery, the artist must be a dancer: he must master, or anyhow practice as best he may, the "gay science" of life. But many novelists, and poets, again like hapless Till, "suffer a frightful shock," as Nietscheze did; and forevermore thereafter are incapable of treading the dance of life, and of singing of its ecstacies, or of relating such wholesome, mysterious tales as Willa Cather's, about Sapphira and the slave girl in which all her main characters, sinners and saints alike, know a life that burns with a steady flame—with leaping gusts of passion now and then. None of Willa Cather's characters are citizens of Laodicia.

Only true aristocrats can know and love, understand and appreciate the heights and depths of poor and humble souls—so specially open and hospitable to the indwelling of God. Without an aristocracy of artists, of genuine scientists, of statesmen, of soldiers and of priests, no free and democratic society can live, flourish and develop.

For always it is a law of life that *quality* must leaven and transmute mere *quantity*—or at least, quality must

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give leadership, which must be obediently followed in democratic nations, or else there will be sickness and decay, as there has been with us since the miserable national failure to do America's bounden duty, after the World War, to support the other free nations with whose armies our armies so splendidly fought, only to be betrayed by the politicians and the money-changers. The consequent degradation of our press is only the most obvious proof of this degenerative process. With Willa Cather, and a number of other elect spirits, however, there was no surrender to the idolatry of mass production, of vulgarization; of Democracy *à rebours*. With the Willa Cathers who may be granted to us in the future, literature again may flourish in a soil of freedom and religion.

Communications

Scotch Plains, N. J.

TO the Editors: Eric Gill and America *would* have got on very well together, as Donald Attwater points out at the end of his splendid tribute, "In Memoriam: Eric Gill," in your January 24 issue. And those Americans who have come to know and love Gill through his work, and the rather unsatisfactory medium of correspondence, will always regret that the war prevented our meeting him personally. The more intimate memory of this truly great Christian artisan and gentleman which Attwater shares with us in his article is some small recompense for our lost chance.

While we never had the benefit of hearing Gill apply his principles and keen intellect to the problems that were distinctively American, we did have, and do have, his books and articles. In these he tackled many problems, and aspects of problems, which are now universal. The "lovingness" that Attwater mentions shines through all Gill's work—wood-engravings, lettering, typography and writing. It was, indeed, a cornerstone of Gill's creed of work. For he saw very clearly that man must be responsible for what he makes, as well as responsible for his purely "moral" actions. Pray and work. But the work also can be a prayer. It can be a prayer when it is accomplished through the exercise of the God-given gifts of free will and intelligence, motivated by love. Man's vocation is Work . . . before and after the Fall it was and is the same. We are by vocation co-creators with God.

Eric Gill took his vocation seriously, as all good Christians should. The results speak for themselves. "Workman" was one of the most sacred words in Gill's vocabulary because he knew it was one of the names of Christ, who is God. And work is one way in which we can exemplify the Creator, in whose image, and through whose Love we were made. Eric Gill was that sort of workman who brought his gifts of free will and intelligence to the work in hand. He also brought a love for God and the things of God to his work. We know he had great satisfaction from it, despite the fact that it is an upstream struggle in our time.

Because of this, he was eloquent in demanding the same for every workman. He was tireless in his effort to bring to the attention of his contemporaries the evils inherent in a system of working which robs the individual workman of responsibility for what he makes. He was tireless in exposing the tricks and clichés by which the mass of workmen were being robbed of even the knowledge of their God-given right. The truth of man's nature and end was for him the real test of any system of working, and the industrial system has been tried and found wanting by that test.

Saint Thomas More pointed out that "sheep were eating men." No one listened, and the sheep did eat England out of her peasantry, and the common Englishman out of his birthright.

Eric Gill came on the stage at a time when "machines were eating men" and there is little more likelihood that he will be heard more than was his great predecessor.

Eric Gill was one kind of workman, and the factory hand another. But he recognized the kinship, and fought for his own. He was no less patient with his brother because he was all too often too busy admiring the new can opener (or trying to make it work) than he was in what Gill had to tell him. He had a great faith in the ordinary workman, and he advocated that since it was impossible to change the industrial mess outright, the very minimum immediate reform would be to give the workmen the ownership of the means of production they operated. Given ownership and responsibility, the workman would have at least partial justice. And when the workman came to accept and strive to practice principles of working which were worthy of his human dignity and Divine gifts, the problem of industrialism would melt away.

Mr. Attwater did not mention two books of Gill's which, to my mind, are among his best work—"Money and Morals," and "Work and Property."

Gill's converts and disciples will have to carry on from where he left off, and fill in the spaces he had not time to fill. America will surely be the scene of some of these labors. Whatever value, or lack of value, men in other nations may set on the things Gill stood for—the freedom and integrity and dignity of the person—here in America these are held in high esteem, and so are those who strive valiantly to preserve and succor them. Eric Gill is one of that noble company.

THOMAS BARRY.

THOSE DISTANT COUNTRIES

Boston, Mass.

TO the Editors: Those Harvard men who in their day were neither the hosts of training tables nor buried prematurely in the vaults of clubs will greatly appreciate the nostalgic memoirs of Mr. Binsse, writing in your Greek issue about Greek restaurants in Boston and in Central Square. Yet why did he live in Central Square? When I came from South Boston to study in Cambridge I too was attracted by the exotic: that is why I lived on Brattle Street.

P. SCAANLIN.

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The Stage & Screen

Lady in the Dark

"THE LADY IN THE DARK" is the saga of Gertrude Lawrence. The play part is written by Moss Hart, and capably enough to display the real matter in hand, which is Miss Lawrence; the music of Kurt Weil and the lyrics of Ira Gershwin are as superior to any other music and lyrics heard this season as is Miss Lawrence to her sister musical artists; the production and lighting of Hazzard Short, the settings of Harry Horner and the costumes designed by Irene Sharaff are magnificently effective. As a serious study of psychoanalysis, "Lady in the Dark" may have its limitations, but as a show, as pure theatre, it has none. It must have cost a fortune to produce, but in entertainment value it is worth every cent spent on it. The story is simple. The woman editor of a fashion magazine goes to a psychoanalyst for a cure for her growing restlessness. This provides the opportunity for a series of flashbacks both of real happenings in the editor's life and also of dreams she has dreamed. At the end she is cured by realizing that she is in love with a man in her office she always thought she had disliked. The story itself is not important, and Mr. Hart's writing not particularly imaginative, but it gives an opportunity to Miss Lawrence to prove once again that she is the most versatile actress on the stage today.

What is there that Miss Lawrence cannot do? She can be a neurotic lady editor, tortured by feelings she doesn't understand; a girl of sixteen in love with her small-town beau; a glamor-girl; a dancer of the waltz; a swing dancer who beats Harlem at its own game; the singer of a risqué song entitled "The Saga of Jenny"; and finally a radiant woman of the world freed from her neurotic feelings and in love for the first time in her life with a man really suited to her. Yes. Gertrude Lawrence can do anything. I verily believe that if she played Lady Macbeth, she would make us forget all other enactments of that tragic queen. And what a Viola she would make! And what a Beatrice! And what, oh what a Portia! When she finishes playing "Lady in the Dark," a society should be formed to prevent her appearing in anything but masterpieces. Of course everything she appears in becomes a masterpiece while she is on the stage, but, oh, the let-down when she is off it! Fortunately she is rarely off it in "Lady in the Dark," and in it at least the lyrics and music are worthy of her. And what daring she displays! She deliberately in the last act allows Danny Kaye to sing a number, "Tschaikowsky," which receives the biggest ovation of the evening up to then, and then she immediately doubly tops it with "The Saga of Jenny"! There are other admirable artists in Mr. Harris's production. Besides Mr. Kaye, there is a new leading man who possesses both charm and intelligence. He is Macdonald Carey, and he certainly will be heard from. Then there are Donald Randolph and Margaret Dale and Victor Mature. All are good, and they had better be when Miss Lawrence is around. *(At the Alvin Theatre.)*

GRENVILLE VERNON.

They Say That Mrs. Whosis

CINEMA wiseacres predicted that Director Alfred Hitchcock's coming to Hollywood would mean his finish as a director of importance. They had to eat their words when his first two Hollywood pictures were tremendously successful. "Rebecca," a melodramatic love story with sinister implications, and "Foreign Correspondent," an international spy and intrigue affair with violence and mystery, showed the direction of the master and touches that are famous up the Hitchcock alley. Now, his third American film is a typical Hollywood product—a bedroomy farce, which if it does not set a new shining light in comedy, at least stands up with the outstanding examples in this country. What *"Mr. and Mrs. Smith"* loses through its own forced, rather shallow story that falls too easily into the pattern of former successful triangle farces, it compensates for in good acting, some moments of hilarious comedy and delightful human touches. That Mr. Hitchcock wasn't at all frightened by this assignment in comedy becomes evident in the fine performances he got out of his three principals: Robert Montgomery, with insolent smile and knowing eyes, as the husband who loves his wife very much but who has become careless and confident until he thinks he's losing her; Carole Lombard as the beautiful but not too intelligent wife who lives by rule and becomes mighty upset when she discovers their three-year-old marriage isn't quite legal; Gene Raymond (doing much better as a brunette and under Hitchcock's direction than he ever did before when he was a blond) as the other man whose broad shoulders, generosity and Southern gentility do not substitute for a husband. Author Norman Krasna's forgetting to tell an interesting story is likely to be a bit annoying to audiences, especially since the line of chatter, which several times goes out of its way to be risqué, and the picture's breezy attitude toward marriage hardly substitute for real comedy. However, no matter how much audiences might prefer Hitchcock of the horror, violence and understatement of "The Lady Vanishes" and "Thirty-nine Steps," they won't exactly fall asleep during the riotously funny scenes in the steam bath, night club or Lake Placid Lodge.

While *"Virginia"* is not to be confused with other pictures named after states, like "Kentucky" and "Maryland," it does have the same old story in which modernists and traditionalists get all mixed up in their ideology. Fortunately Virginia Van Upp's script contains adult humor and does *not* have a silly, old-school family feud. But it does have feuding: proud, Yankee-hating Virginians still seem to believe in these times that there are only two kinds of people—Virginians and non-Virginians. They are still fighting the Civil War with their chivalry, noblesse oblige and love for sacred though slightly shop-worn traditions. Perhaps "Virginia" presents their viewpoint truthfully; it makes a strong case for them in their resentment of today's invaders from the north who move into this famed, historical state because "it's the smart thing to do." Ed-

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ward H. Griffith managed to direct this Southern Glamor without swooning in the honeysuckle. I wish he had kept his head clear in the characterizations, particularly with the Negroes who are phony straight through. There is one embarrassingly bad scene in which an old slave darky comes "home to die." But there is also much beauty in the cast. Technicolor, even when not used at its best, heightens the glow of the three handsome blonds from the north: Madeleine Carroll (looking more gorgeous than ever), Stirling Hayden (a bit stiff in his first role, but exhibiting an unaffected boyish virility) and Marie Wilson (whose brand of charm and wit are seen too seldom). Fred MacMurray represents the dyed-in-the-wool South, but he can't compete with little Carolyn Lee who steals the show with her childishly adult observations wrapped in a dripping Southern accent. In spite of its story's inconsistencies and tricky ending, "Virginia" makes good entertainment.

Only those who attended either of the fairs of '39 could have seen *"Land of Liberty."* We welcome the announcement that it will now be released for general distribution, for the picture is not only an interesting, though cursory, review of the history of the United States, but it is also a successful experiment in cinema. It consists of 125 extracts from historical feature films, shorts, documentaries and newsreels made during the past 25 years. Assembled and edited under the supervision of Cecil B. DeMille, "Land of Liberty" is sponsored by Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, Inc., and is the work of the entire industry. The picture vividly brings to life in its many sequences the highlights from the Revolution to our times. Its faults—of misplaced emphasis, omission and an occasional too hasty glance at a period—are due not so much to purposeful distortion as to the paucity of feature films covering certain episodes of our history. This American drama is practically without Colonial Period, problems of banking, labor and depression. One is most impressed with the film's lack of depth as the chronology approaches the present. Its narration, although not particularly inspired, carries the continuity well from scene to scene and emphasizes the continued struggle for freedom, the folkways of Americans and the theme of their history as set forth in the Declaration of Independence. Americans might well be proud of their achievements, but must look forward to new heights and the conquering of new problems.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

America's Part

American Neutrality, Trial and Failure. Charles G. Fenwick. New York University.
America and a New World Order. Graeme K. Howard. Scribners. $2.00.

COMPARISON of these short books on American foreign policy is difficult because of their wide divergence and their baffling similarity. Both men examine the relation of this country to others, one from the point of view of economics, especially of trade, the other from the angle of international law in war time. Both men are interested in the prospect of world reorganization, and in what might be called "Hemisphere diplomacy." Mr. Howard scans the future with vigorous optimism; Dr. Fenwick surveys the past with some pessimism. Each recognizes ethical considerations in American policy, and each would reform our international relations, but the reforms would differ widely.

Mr. Howard's emphasis is on internal organization. He sketches world problems in large truisms and generalities, without much reference to detail or to intensive analysis. According to him, today's ills come from the refusal of Left and Right groups within nations to apply "aggregate" tests in their domestic policies. An "aggregate" test, illustrated rather than defined, resembles Bentham's principle of utility. Other nations, envying Great Britain her economic successes of the nineteenth century, have copied her example, sometimes aided by her capital, with the result that her supremacy has faded in a world of large nations, avid for power. If peace is to supersede force in this world, the United States must steer a middle course between Left and Right in the interest of "equality of opportunity for all peoples of the world." His specific remedies seem to point to a return to conditions previous to the war of 1914. He lays down a many-pointed program wherein America would stay out of war unless its "security" were threatened (just how is left vague). We should build a large army and navy, but speak softly. The free play of the profit system would be encouraged by return to the gold standard and by military defense of trade rights. The gold standard would be reinstated by the simple process of paying gold for increased imports to this country. To him, our present gold policy is gross self-deceit, by which we receive valueless metal for valuable goods; yet he would have us continue this loss of goods by a renewal of the lending and investment methods by which Great Britain lost her economic prestige. He would have us give away our surpluses in relief, and begin our charity at home. He hopes to see us mediate among belligerents at the end of this war. He would leave Argentina to European connections and limit the application of the Monroe Doctrine to this continent and northern South America; within this area there should be thoroughly organized economic and military ties, a "cooperative regionalism." He is not interested in republican institutions; the United States is hypocritical in connecting an interest in democracy with the Monroe Doctrine; neither the totalitarian powers nor Japan has any quarrel with us "other than the quarrel which we ourselves wish to initiate." America should resist the effort of any great power to encroach on our interests in this hemisphere, but we might encourage the Pacific dependencies of Great Britain to develop an "enlightened" immigration policy, and we might permit Japan to expand in the Asiatic region, but not at the expense of the white race in the British dependencies. The basis of this "new" world order is material power, economic forces bolstered by military support; ethics appears only in the compulsion of governing groups to seek the "aggregate" good. Mr. Howard omits any consideration of the effect of the declining birth rate on this expanding production and commerce; nor does he explain what may happen when American foreign loans have raised up for us what similar activities produced for Great Britain—competitors in our favorite markets. Heigh-ho.

Dr. Fenwick's study of American "neutrality" legislation is, in contrast, factual and detailed, with appended

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documents. Originally offered as lectures on the Stokes Foundation, it brings the past to judge the present scene. He differs from Mr. Howard in making morality rather than power the primary element in law. His thesis, supported from history, is that neutrality is inherently illogical, a concept of power possible only to strong states not economically too involved in the theater of war. Its meaning has shifted from non-participation to impartiality and back to non-belligerence. Paradoxically, it must be defended by the very condition it seeks to avoid—war. Although war was not completely "outlawed" by the Covenant of the League of Nations, neutrality practically was, for all signatories. In its place the author would set a definition of aggressor, binding upon nations, and an agency for applying the definition.

In the present war, he believes, neutrality of either meaning is an obsolete term. The states supposedly neutral have either abandoned neutral rights such as the doctrine of the freedom of the seas, or have sought to isolate themselves behind new concepts of law such as that of the "security zone," which incidentally would require extensive patrol at great expense. New belligerent controls have tended to be economic rather than military, like the navicert system carried over from the last war, the inspection of mails, the export blockade, and the government requisition of private foreign credits. A neutral which accepts them is neither impartial nor non-participant, in theory or fact. Contact mines inflict damage without reference to nationality or belligerent character. It is hard to reconcile the private sale of enormous bombers with the doctrine of the Alabama case; although it came too late to be discussed by him, the public exchange of public ships for naval bases is factually even less impartial and non-participant. American policy today is partial and non-belligerent. His argument reveals the difficulty of maintaining legal distinctions in the face of economic as well as military change. In a few cases, probably as result of the lecture method or of haste, one finds an argument not wholly convincing. Why are totalitarian governments singled out as exercising extensive control over their citizens? Great Britain, a belligerent, and the United States, a "neutral," are both doing it. He approves the British comment on the "security zone" and ridicules that of the Germans, where each government really pointed out how the zone could be used by its enemies in the present war. It is history, not law, which gives Britain the advantage of colonies in these waters. Is it the "destructive potentialities of the air fleet of a powerful belligerent" that has intimidated many neutrals, or their own unpreparedness, their blindness to the economic character of modern war, their failure to see the connection of internal with external policies? In the Altmark case, which presents a novel problem under the law of "passage" through neutral territorial waters, is it true that there is "no substantial difference" in the force of hostilities, "between the forcible seizure of prisoners" (on the high seas) "and their forcible detention in the hold of the prison ship" (in neutral waters)? Were not Russia and Finland "technically at war" when their opposing uniformed forces employed material force?

These are minor points; in its broad lines the study reduces neutrality to a fiction, created to assist the development of international communication, and now being destroyed by the magnitude and complexity of international ties, and the shrinking of distances. Mr. Howard places internal organization first; Dr. Fenwick puts international

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organization before it, but on one important point both agree. Civil order must serve man rather than be served by him, and trade beyond national borders is a vital part of the order. ELIZABETH M. LYNSKEY.

HISTORY

The Old Deal and the New. Charles A. Beard and George H. E. Smith. Macmillan. $2.00.

HERE, once more, is the kind of incisive historical analysis these authors have led us to expect. They offer the simple thesis that the New Deal is not an isolated phenomenon, but a prolongation of history. Hence they offer us a distillation of the facts, ideas and interests that formed the texture of the Old Deal. Thus the first two chapters are not only brilliant summaries of the economics of the Old Deal but also of the cultural context.

In respect of economic activity, they discover to us the wide divergence between theory and fact. They indicate that, between 1870 and 1930, two great structural changes had taken place in our economy. (1) The relative decline of agriculture and the rise of industry; (2) the growth of the service occupations as a distinct branch of economic activity. They show that "the disproportion between producing and non-producing segments was becoming too great for a profit economy." This, of course, was an analysis of which the New Deal was not ignorant.

After they have evaluated the earlier New Deal, these authors record the interesting fact that, after the breakdown of NRA, the President abandoned the idea of co-operative, concerted planning. Thence he returned to traditional reform methods. From 1935 the New Deal has meant a series of reform attacks along many fronts. But, from this date, nowhere do the authors perceive that these attacks are the result of some overarching conception. It is this which accounts for apparent contradictions of which Thurman Arnold's quixotic, though sincere, program is the most noticeable. "If tragedy had not overhung the scene, this anti-trust policy would have presented the greatest diversion in the whole history of the Folklore of Capitalism."

Messrs. Beard and Smith note with a sense of irony and deep concern that, with the fall of France, our spending program shifted to military objectives. And that here criticism from the conservatives died away.

Beard and Smith write of the New Deal, in its many aspects, with high praise indeed. Yet they are aware that this new dispensation is the fruit of deficit financing. About the results of this they are profoundly disturbed. Into the abyss of future time they peer with deep concern. They do not like our foreign policy. They are uneasy. Their fears are the quiet fears of learned men. They find need for such a concentration of talents, ingenuity, interests and will power as we have not had since 1787. These words are not lightly to be dismissed: "Never in all the history of the country, not even during the long Civil War, had the people moved in such an intellectual and emotional daze as they did while these events transpired. In their easy, almost abject acceptance of all that was handed out to them by the Administration was revealed a profound change in national temper—a deeper subservience to government policy and instruction then had prevailed during the height of the World War in President Wilson's administration. Charles E. Hughes' prophecy that constitutional government could scarcely survive another great war was pertinent."

FRANCIS DOWNING.

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BRIEFERS

My Sister and I. Dirk van der Heide. Harcourt. $1.00.

THE impact of five days of total war on a sensitive and courageous Dutch boy of well-to-do parents. He gives a direct and simple account of what he felt and did when in a cellar with bombs falling close by, what he thought and what was his fear, and the mastery of that fear, when he saw the machine gunning of men, women and children in flight along the Dutch roads, and when a nearby refugee ship was sunk. This boy of 12 tells only what he saw and what he heard but it makes an unforgettable picture and a powerful anti-war document.

The Record Book. David Hall. Smith & Durrell. $3.50.

MR. HALL is a knowledgeable student of phonograph records, and his 771-page book is sound and up-to-date. It does not pretend to be as compendious as Robert Darrell's *Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia,* but, unlike that work, it offers criticisms and comparisons of the discs it lists. The plan of *The Record Book* has its faults: it is not easy to locate a work at a glance, since records are catalogued (symphonic, chamber, keyboard music, etc.) on left-hand pages, while a running commentary hastens along on the right. Everything from choosing needles to collecting out-of-print discs.

Portinari: His Life and Art. University of Chicago. $7.50.

SLICK Italianate portraits of handsome society women; Picasso-esque Junos by the seashore; Rivera-like frescoes of heroic peasants in monumental labor; surrealist doll-children and flapping scarecrows. Which is the true Cândido Portinari? Those who missed his recent one-man shows at the Detroit Institute of Arts and New York's Museum of Modern Art may study the diverse but always vital manners of this gifted Brazilian in the de luxe volume published by the University of Chicago. Unhappily, he comes through weakly in black and white and the eight color reproductions are worth the hundred duo-tones, good as these are. Rockwell Kent's brief introduction is "inspirational" rather than critical.

The United States and Japan's New Order. William C. Johnstone. Oxford. $3.00.

A COMPETENT summary of U. S. relations with the Far East, with major attention on concessions, extra territoriality and other characteristics of our commerce with China. The author's recommendations for American foreign policy include: economic agreements and alliances with the British Empire for the Far East, intelligent propaganda in Japan and at home, peace in the Far East through genuine economic threats against Japan.

Life & Law. Samuel Williston. Little, Brown. $4.00.

THE author of the most authoritive work on the law of contracts in the United States narrates his life and work. Born in a middle class home in 1861, reared in Cambridge, he attended Harvard where he later became a professor of law. His law clerk days, experience as a practicing attorney, secretaryship under Judge Horace Gray and his association with such brilliant legal lights as Thayer, Ames and Langdell, make pleasant reading.

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FEBRUARY this year witnesses the twentieth annual observance of Catholic Press Month in the United States. According to *Catholic Action*, monthly publication of the NCWC, Bishop John England of Charleston, S. C., founded the "first continuing Catholic newspaper in the United States" and brought out the first issue of the *Catholic Miscellany* in June, 1822. Apparently the *Miscellany* was primarily a vigorous champion of the cause of Catholicism in a day when religious controversy was violent and continuous. Bishop England's success is attested to by the fact that in January, 1826, he was invited to address the Congress of the United States and his two-hour discourse on the relationship of American citizenship and the Catholic Faith was long remembered.

The first strictly Catholic magazine, the *Metropolitan*, or *Catholic Monthly Magazine*, was founded in Baltimore in 1830. The history of the Catholic press before the Civil War is quite a variegated one. Few of the periodicals were able to continue for long. Of the twenty-odd newspapers and half-dozen magazines founded up to 1840, only 5 were still in existence in 1840. In the next twenty years 50 Catholic newspapers and 5 magazines were founded, but only 9 of the papers and one magazine survived. Several of these ceased publication during the Civil War. But 17 of the 120 Catholic papers and 40 Catholic magazines founded here between 1865 and 1880 are still in existence.

Today there are in the United States "151 Catholic newspapers with circulations totalling 3,000,000. There are 208 Catholic magazines reaching 5,000,000 subscribers. The newspaper include nine dailies, one of which—the *Daily Tribune* of Dubuque, Iowa—is in the English language. There are a few semi-weeklies and approximately 135 weeklies. . . . About 80 dioceses now have newspaper organs of their own."

The NCWC News Service sends out about 50,000 words a week, a feature service and a Catholic pictorial service to its periodical subscribers. Pope Pius XI said of the Catholic press: "Here is a field of apostolate worthy of all the solicitude and interest of good Catholics, of the members of Catholic Action. They can never cultivate the Catholic press enough."

CONTRIBUTORS

Franz WERFEL, author of "The Forty Days of Musa Dagh," "Hearken Unto the Voice" and "Embezzled Heaven," choice of the Book of the Month Club and the Catholic Book Club. He has recently come to America and this is one of the first stories he has published since his arrival.

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